

My First Glimpse of Frank
Benson 223

when George Alexander, the original Paris, left
the Lyceum
for a time. Already Benson gave promise of
turning out
quite a different person from the others. He
had not nearly
so much of the actor's instinct as Terriss,
but felt that
he had far more earnestness. He was easily
distinguished
as a man with a purpose, one of those workers
who "scorn
delights and live laborious days/¹ Those
laborious days
led him at last to the control of two or three
companies,
all travelling through Great Britain playing a
Shakespearean
repertoire. A wonderful organiser, a actor
(oddly
enough, the more difficult the part the better
he is—I like
his *Lear*), and a man who has always been
associated with
high endeavour^ Frank Benson's name is
honoured all
over England. He was only at the*Lyceum for
this one
production, but he always regarded - Henry
Irving as the
source of the good work that he did
afterwards,

" Thank you very much/" he wrote to me
after his first
night as Paris, " for writing me a word of
encouragement.

... I was very much ashamed and disgusted
with myself
all Sunday for my poverty-stricken and thin
performance.

... I think I was a little better last night.
Indeed I was
much touched at the kindness and sympathy
of all the
company and their efforts to make the
awkward new boy
feel at home. ... I feel doubly grateful to

Mr.
Irving for the light you shed from the lamp
of art on **life**
now that I begin to understand the labour
the process of trimming the Lamp entails,"